

DHSS RE-ORGANIZATION

Serving Those who need it the Most

Mike Protack For Governor

Newark Senior Center 26 August 12 Noon



Delaware Health and Social Services under the current organization has proven to be fragmented, inefficient and inadequately responding to the needs of the citizens of Delaware. Our state government must deliver essential services to those who need them and also deliver value to taxpayers.

I believe the current situation simply is not good enough for the people of Delaware and especially not for older people and people with disabilities who already have many issues to deal with to survive everyday. We lack a central location in government where people speak out so government can fix problems and use information to improve the current system!

Since the passage of the American with Disabilities Act in 1990 and the renewals of the Older Americans Act, there have been many positive changes for both people with disabilities and older people. Delaware has not kept up with changing needs and Delaware's population is aging fast. Delaware is significantly behind other states around the nation in how it serves older people and those with disabilities. When all our citizens who are older or who have disabilities can fully participate in their communities, then the entire state will be stronger. So Delaware needs to begin now to unify around the belief in the dignity of every individual and every person has a civic responsibility to advance the common good.

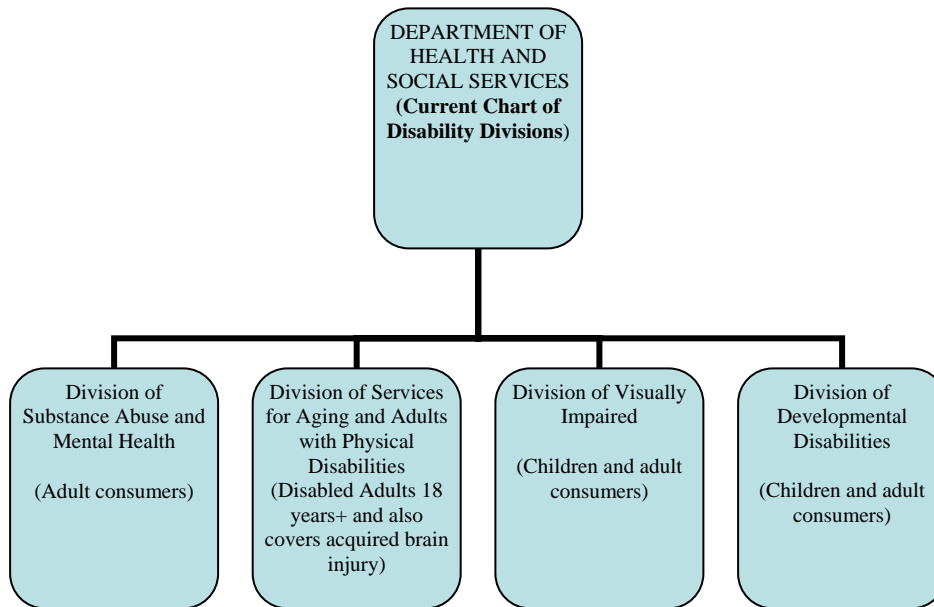
This is why I propose today a specific plan to reform Delaware's Disabilities System and face our challenges head on instead of making minor quick fixes. The new DHSS organization, under the direct supervision of the Governor will have as its vision that all Delawareans with a disability or who are older adults will be valued and respected and have the information and opportunity they need to be empowered so they can make a difference in their own lives and be encouraged to make a difference in the lives of others. The newly structured Department of Disabilities will, through strong, productive partnerships between state agencies, individuals, providers and organizations within the disability community will make my vision of "One Delaware" a reality. Delawareans will now be able to access and navigate the system like never before through the use of highly trained health and social services specialists, innovative technology and customer-driven service goals.

The new Department of Disabilities will have an Office of Constituent Relations whose mission will be to answer every call and every complaint rapidly, efficiently and with correct information and have a strong quality control component so that we will see faster and more ongoing improvement of services in this department. I will also create a Grants Coordination Office within the Governor's office and the Department so Delaware will not miss opportunities to secure federal and private funding to create and the programs it needs to support Delawareans in need. Since the new Department of Disabilities will report directly to Governor's Liaison for Disabilities within the Governor's office, changes will be coordinated and happen more rapidly. no more shifting the blame or ignoring problems

Therefore, here is "why" we must make changes in Delaware Health and Social Services, Delaware's largest department, with more than 10,000 employees. These are the 4 missions of the new DHSS because DHSS is not focused on these important goals:

- 1. To elevate the status of persons who are older and have disabilities so that they can be valued, respected and included in every aspect of Delaware society to advance the goal of "One Delaware."**
- 2. To provide strong and much needed collaboration with individuals, groups, organizations and coalitions so that current and future resources can be used more efficiently and effectively to meet unmet needs.**
- 3. To provide a central point of coordination so that state agencies will work collaboratively, efficiently and in a customer-driven way among all constituent parties and within the community at large to advance the interests of older people and people with disabilities and improve government services.**
- 4. To actively plan and promote consumer options for the future so that Delawareans with disabilities and older people can live a life of dignity and respect and contribute to the community in which they live, work and play....**

Current Structure



REFORM OF DELAWARE'S DISABILITIES SERVICES

